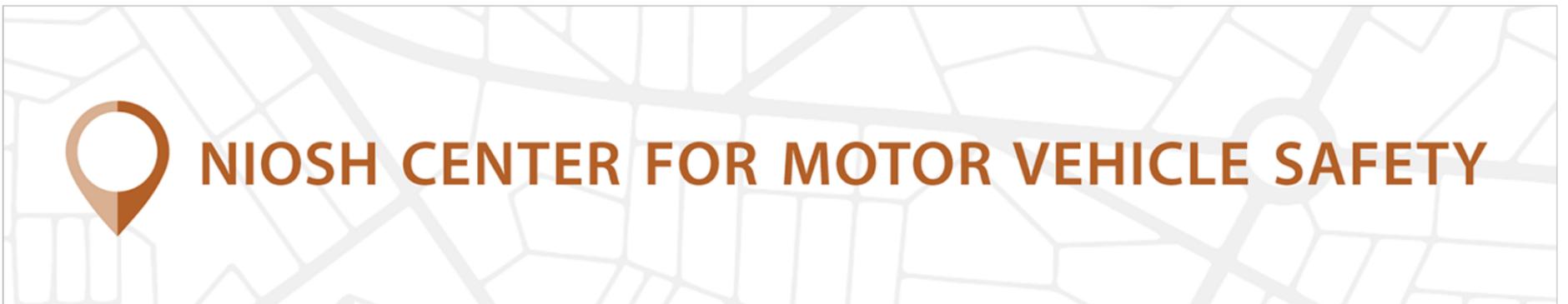


Behind the Wheel at Work – Vol 7 No 2



Behind the Wheel at Work is a quarterly eNewsletter bringing you the latest news from the NIOSH Center for Motor Vehicle Safety.

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Speed

As speed increases, drivers have less time to react to road dangers and maneuver to avoid a crash. This month we're sharing ways that employers and drivers can maintain safe speeds.

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In This Issue

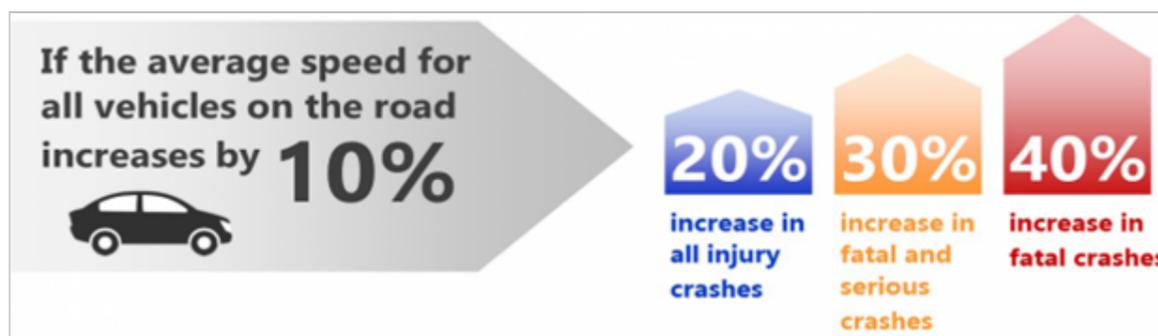
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The Facts

Why is speeding so dangerous?

The higher the speed, the more deadly the crash as speeding can reduce a driver's ability to negotiate curves or move around obstacles in the roadway. Speeding is illegal and endangers not only the lives of the occupants in the speeding vehicle, but all of the people on the road around them, including law enforcement officers. In the United States, driving over the speed limit or too fast for conditions is the factor cited most often by law enforcement officers when they investigate a fatal crash.

A driver needs at least 1 second to react. The faster you drive, the farther your car will continue to travel before it can stop. This means you're more likely to crash. And, the faster you drive, the greater the amount of mechanical (kinetic) energy that must be absorbed by the impact. This means you're more likely to be killed or seriously injured. The graphic below shows the relationship between speed and crash type.^[1]



Motor vehicle crashes related to speeding in 2020^[2-3]

Speeding means that the driver is going faster than the speed limit. It also includes driving too fast for road or weather conditions, even if you're not going over the speed limit.

- In 2020, 11,258 people killed in speeding-related crashes, accounting for 29% of all traffic fatalities in the United States. On average—30 per day.
- Of these, the majority killed were drivers (73%) followed by passengers (21%).
- Speeding-related crash fatalities increased 17% from 2019.
- Texas (1,446), California (1,228), South Carolina (494) and North Carolina (489) were the states with the most speeding-related traffic fatalities.
- Of the 11,063 speeding-related fatalities in traffic crashes with known roadway type, the majority occurred on non-interstate roadways (87%).
- Speeding was involved in 37% of the fatal crashes in construction or maintenance zones.
- Of the 10,295 drivers who were speeding when involved in fatal crashes, 37% were found to have blood alcohol concentrations of .08 g/dL or greater.
- An estimated 308,013 people injured (13% of total people injured) in speeding-related crashes in the United States.

Did you know?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that for most vehicles, gas mileage usually decreases rapidly at speeds above 50 mph. In general, each 5 mph you drive over 50 mph is like paying an additional 20 cents a gallon for gas.

The bottom line: Reduce speeding. Driving within the speed limit keeps drivers and others on the road safer.

[1] Nilsson, G. (2004). Traffic safety dimensions and the power model to describe the effect of speed on safety. Bulletin 221, Lund Institute of Technology, Lund.

[2] Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool (FIRST) (nhtsa.gov) [↗](#)

[3] Traffic Safety Facts – 2020 Data: Speeding (dot.gov) [↗](#)

How to Manage the Risks of Speeding



Photo by ©Hanna Plonsak / Getty Images

As an employer, you can take steps to promote safe speeds and inform workers who drive on the job how to stay safe behind the wheel.

What Employers Can Do [↗](#)

- Establish a safe-speed policy and communicate to drivers what they need to do to comply:
 - Require drivers to report any speeding convictions on their driver's license.
 - Set meaningful consequences for drivers with speeding convictions on or off the job and give speeding convictions substantial weight in criteria for identifying high-risk drivers.
 - Assess drivers' schedules and work assignments to make sure that work can be completed at safe speeds.

- In driver training, convey messages about the dangers and consequences of speeding, emphasize that speed must also be adjusted to suit road conditions.
 - Remind drivers to observe posted speed limits, especially in school zones and work zones.
 - Consider using in-vehicle monitoring systems that can identify speeding by comparing vehicle speed to the speed limit for the road.
 - Consider “speed governors” or “speed limiters,” used primarily on large trucks that keep the vehicle from exceeding a set maximum speed.
-

What Drivers Can Do ^

- Allow more time for your trips to avoid the need for speeding.
 - Pay attention to warning signs and follow reduced speed limits, especially in school zones and work zones.
 - Pay closer attention to the speedometer to see how fast you are driving.
 - Considering using navigation apps that give visual or sound alerts when driving over the speed limit.
 - Allow extra space for large vehicles, which cannot slow down and maneuver as easily as passenger vehicles, especially when going downhill or on wet, slippery, or uneven pavement.
 - Stay out of the far-left lane, except when passing.
-

Go-to Resources



Photo by ©Getty Images

NIOSH Animated Image: [Speeding](#)

Traffic Safety Marketing: [Speed Prevention Campaign](#) 

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [Speeding and Aggressive Driving Prevention](#) 

Governors Highway Safety Association: [Speeding and Aggressive Driving](#) 

National Safety Council: [Speeding](#) 

In Other News

FOCUS Road Safety Program Brings Cultures of Safety, Workforce Development to Small and Medium Size Fleets

FOCUS on Fleet Safety, offered by Together for Safer Roads, is a [professional development program](#)  to help companies build safe and efficient operations through a combination of safety training, leadership development and technology. Developed in partnership with fleet leaders and experts in organizational management, the FOCUS program helps fleets go beyond compliance and actively contribute to safety. FOCUS takes best practices from fleets and the U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe Center and “right-sizes” them for small- and mid-sized organizations. Program participants work with safety experts and have access to industry leaders to bring actionable learnings back to their teams, creating real and sustained changes that save lives on the road and create stronger organizations and communities.

More Information

- Please send your comments and suggestions to us: kur4@cdc.gov

- Visit our webpage: [Motor Vehicle Safety at Work](#)